The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news summaries and authentic interpretations of matters affecting labor occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WE PLEDGE—
A BILLION DOLLARS
OF
WAR SAVINGS BONDS
FOR VICTORY

WHOLE NO. 1706 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, DECEMBER 21, 1943 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 33, NO. 51

FACING the FACTS

With PHILIP PEARL

As the old year ends, alarming indications come from several quarters that America may be preparing to lower her sights on post-war objectives in the New Year.

The first discordant note was sounded at the recent annual meeting of the National Association of Manufacturers where business spokesmen began tinkering with the idea of reducing "full employment" to "wide" employment as a post-war goal.

This discouraging symptom was followed by a survey published by the Brookings Institution which sought to prove that even maximum post-war production would still leave five million American workers unemployed.

The second frightening development was the casual remark dropped by President Roosevelt at his first press conference after his return to the White House that the objective of the international conferences at Cairo and Teheran was to prevent the recurrence of war "in the next generation."

Another significant statement by the President at the same press conference was that Stalin impressed him as being a "realist."

Let's analyze these developments in the light of previously enunciated post-war objectives to see what they really mean.

Peace or War?

During the early part of 1942, the American people were repeatedly assured that the two main post-war objectives for which our country is fighting were "lasting peace" and "full employment."

Is this program now being scaled down? The President's remarks would seem to indicate so.

If the objective of the United Nations is merely to prevent a new war in the next generation—or until 1965—the very means to accomplish this end may force a new war in the following generation.

In fact, if we seek to abolish war for only twenty years or so, that's a comparatively easy task. All we have to do is to treat enemy nations exactly as they would have treated us if we lost. All we have to do is to follow the pattern of the Versailles Conference after the last war. Then we will have certain peace for twenty years and certain war again after that.

The President found Stalin a "realist." The French were regarded as "realists" after the last war and we were somewhat contemptuously referred to as "idealists" because we sought to banish war for all time. The French won out and we came to realize that a "realist" is one who can't see beyond the end of his own nose.

Let us not lower our sights with regard to peace planning. Let us not trade our ideal of permanent peace for the temporary but illusory advantages of a twenty-year armistice. Let us not begin preparing for the next war the moment this one ends. Let us insist on doing everything possible to make the next war impossible. We may not entirely succeed. But if we keep our sights high and sincerely strive for high objectives we are bound to accomplish more than if we admit defeat before we even start.

Watching the Cars Go By

We cannot plan the future if we keep thinking in terms of the past. We cannot hope to succeed in the years to come if we continue to build on the same foundations that collapsed in former years.

This holds equally true of our domestic economy. When the National Association of Manufacturers begins shying away from the original national goal of "full employment" it is thinking in terms of the past. When the Brookings Institution looks ahead to the permanent disemployment of five million workers despite maximum production, it is also getting itself bogged down in memory.

Maximum production does not mean pre-war production. It does not even mean expanded pre-war production. It presages, as we see it, an entirely new kind of production.

In the past, the American standard of living, although higher than that of other countries, still left much to be desired. Millions of our people were trapped in enforced poverty. Others lived stood handicapped by the roadside and watched palatial limousines roll by. They were not privileged to enjoy the vaunted American standard of living. They were not privileged to take advantage of free opportunity. From birth they were handicapped by insufficient and improper food, by poor housing, by lack of schooling, by the lack of material, spiritual and intellectual opportunities which our country is supposed to afford its people.

Maximum production, going hand in hand with full employment, can surely be accomplished if we do afford opportunities to work and to buy and to achieve to the millions of underprivileged Americans. What we have in mind is not Government charity or another WPA, but good business. Good business means the development of the largest possible market for the products of industry and agriculture. That can be attained and must be attained in the post-war period by developing the purchasing power of all the American people. Let's not lower our sights on that goal!

New Year Message

By WILLIAM GREEN,
President, American Federation of Labor
(For release in New Year's editions)

Let's win the war in '44!

That is labor's slogan, its goal and its highest resolve for the coming year.

American workers, who have won the battle of production in record time, are determined to do their utmost in the months ahead to bring the war to a speedy and victorious conclusion. To help our fighting forces in the supreme tasks that lie ahead, American workers are ready to work and sacrifice as never before.

Victory over Hitler and the Japs will not, however, end labor's responsibilities to the cause of freedom. We will not consider this war won until we have capped our military victories with equal triumphs for our other post-war objectives. These are:

1—The establishment of lasting peace under world democracy.

2—The provision of jobs for all in peace-time America.

As the armed forces of the United Nations drive irresistibly forward against the enemy in the coming year, labor will not lose sight of these post-war objectives for a moment.

This past year has been one of increasing sacrifice and deprivation for the American people. Many American homes have been hit by casualties on the battlefronts and many American workers are in mourning for their lost sons. Compared with these blows, the minor shortages and deprivations on the home front caused by war conditions must be regarded as mere annoyances. Compared with the bloodshed, the destruction and the real starvation suffered by the people of other lands, America has still been spared the most devastating effects of war.

Our progress in winning the war gained considerable momentum in 1943. The forces of the United Nations completed the cleanup in North Africa, mopped up the Axis troops in Sicily and are now sweeping northward through Italy toward Germany's vulnerable southern borders. The armies of Soviet Russia are steadily pushing the Nazis back toward their eastern borders. The international conferences which have taken place among the leaders of the United Nations presage the early opening up of new fighting fronts on the north and west of Nazi Germany. Hitler is now trapped and the roof of his fortress has been broken through by smashing air raids. It can't be long before the Nazis are forced to surrender unconditionally.

Meanwhile, the forces of the United Nations have delivered crushing blows against the Japanese in the South Pacific and are steadily moving forward along the long road to Tokio. The Japanese navy and air forces have been repeatedly and humiliatingly defeated. The initiative is on our side now.

We issue this New Year warning to the enemy—that in the coming year labor, agriculture and industry will back up the fighting forces of the United Nations with the greatest output of planes, tanks, guns and ships the world has ever known.

America grows ever stronger as our enemies grow progressively weaker. For these reasons, we cannot believe that final victory will be long delayed.

In anticipation of that victory, I extend to America's soldiers, sailors and marines, to her production soldiers, and to her vast army of patriotic citizens, best wishes for a happy New Year.

Army-Navy "E" For Excellence Goes To 5,664,000 Workers

Production Award Figures, Obtained by AFL, Show Why America is Winning War, Green Says

Washington, D. C.—THIS IS THE MOST ENCOURAGING AND CONSTRUCTIVE LABOR NEWS STORY OF THE WAR!

The astonishing total of 5,664,000 workers, employed in 2,415 war plants, have received Army and Navy "E" awards for excellence of production since Pearl Harbor.

This was announced by the American Federation of Labor which obtained the official figures from the War and Navy Departments.

It is the first time that the military authorities have permitted the release of figures on the aggregate number of workers receiving the "E" buttons. Hitherto announcements on "E" awards have been restricted to the number of plants, without disclosing the number of workers who share in the awards.

The War Department informed the American Federation of Labor that its awards had gone to 1,490 plants employing 3,864,000 workers up to Dec. 1. The Navy Department, after allowing for duplications with Army awards, said its net totals were 828 plants with 1,800,000 workers.

AFL President William Green commented:

"The fact that a total of 5,664,000 American war workers have received the coveted "E" award is especially impressive because the qualifications for this honor have been raised since the war began.

"Not only high standards of efficiency in production, but good relations between labor and management and full compliance with many stringent wartime regulations must be attained before a plant and its workers can qualify.

"The figures include non-union as well as union workers. The military authorities have no breakdown available in this respect. The American Federation of Labor made determined efforts to obtain this information not for the purpose of seeking praise for its own members but to bring home to the public the high standard of service being rendered by American labor as a whole to the war effort.

"We understand that the War and Navy Departments have hitherto been reluctant to divulge the total number of workers who received the decoration on the theory that the award would lose significance to the workers when its lack of 'exclusiveness' became apparent.

"The American Federation of Labor believes, on the contrary, that workers who receive the award will be proud not only of their own record but of the fact that so many other workers are meeting the high tests of the military authorities.

"America has now won the battle of production beyond any question of doubt. This fact speaks volumes for the good job done by the great mass of war workers. The high excellence of production attained by as many as 5,664,000 war workers helped to win that battle in record time."

DAILY PRESS IGNORES GOOD LABOR NEWS

Washington, D. C.—The daily press, giving full confirmation of its anti-labor bias, completely ignored the most constructive labor news story of the war—the fact that 5,664,000 American workers had been awarded Army-Navy "E" buttons for excellence of production.

Although the story was made available to all newspapers and press services three days in advance of the release date, not a single line of it appeared in print.

These same newspapers have frequently published stories about awards to employers. The fact that they failed to give any space to the awards to workers is extremely significant.

MORGENTHAU HITS PLAN FOR HUGE PROFITS

Washington, D. C.—Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau denounced Congress for opening the door to "truly extortionate profits" by war contractors.

In a bitter statement issued at a press conference, Morgenthau charged that changes voted by Congress with regard to the renegotiation of war contracts's recapture excess profits, "hold the seed of a national scandal."

Renegotiation thus far has recovered more than five billion dollars in excess profits.

CONGRESS TAKES HOLIDAY, DELAYING VITAL ACTION

Washington, D. C.—Congress voted itself a three-week holiday after postponing until next February the vital decision on whether food price subsidies shall be continued to prevent uncontrolled inflation of the cost of living.

The holiday also delays action on the resolution calling for sanction of the 5-cent hourly pay increase, for non-operating railroad workers and on the pending measures to give members of the armed forces the opportunity to vote in the coming elections.

Members of the American Federation of Labor will take advantage of the holiday to write or wire their representatives in Congress in support of labor's stand on these important issues!

Publicity Program For Minnesota AFL

Minneapolis, Minn.—The Minnesota Federation of Labor has inaugurated a full-time publicity department, financed by a 5-cent increase in the per capita tax of federation affiliates. The action was announced at a two-day conference at the University of Minnesota.

Roger Kemp, speaker was Educational Director Mark Starr of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, who urged other federations and unions to follow the lead of the Minnesota AFL in carrying the story to the public.

Said Minnesota Federation of Labor is to be praised for its pioneering effort in being the first state to "set up a public relations division," he said.

In addition to the state AFL, sponsors of the conference were St. Paul Trades Labor Assembly, Minneapolis Central Labor Union, Local 444, American Federation of Teachers, in cooperation with the Workers Education Bureau. Panels dealt with political action, public relations, trade unionism and the schools, consumer questions and racial minority problems.

UNIONISTS COMMISSIONED QUARTERMASTER OFFICERS

Camp Lee, Va.—Lt. John H. McGowen, of Lodi, Calif., and member of Local 68, Laundry and Dry Cleaners Union, and Lt. Lawrence Pelvey, Jr., 219 12th St., Rockville, Ill., and member of Kitchen Employees Local 1, Joiners Union, were among the Quartermaster Corps officers commissioned recently at the Quartermaster School here.

Before entering active military duty Lt. McGowen was a laundry owner in Stockton shipyard. He was graduated from Stockton High School and from the College of the Pacific.

In civilian life Lt. Pelvey was a carpenter for the Green River Ordnance Plant.

AFL Urges Congress Give Soldiers Right To Vote In Coming Elections

Washington, D. C.—AFL President William Green called upon the House of Representatives to enact "simplified legislation" permitting members of the armed forces, including those overseas, to vote in the coming elections.

In a letter to Chairman Eugene Worley of the House Committee on Election of President, Vice President and Representatives in Congress, Mr. Green assailed the soldier vote measure adopted by the Senate as "indefensibly restrictive, limited in its application and highly objectionable from either a patriotic or political point of view. Text of the letter follows:

"The American Federation of Labor wholeheartedly and unanimously favors the extension of the widest opportunity to the members of the armed forces of our nation to vote in the next election. It seems inconceivable that those who are serving in the armed forces of our nation should be restricted, even to the slightest degree, in the exercise of their right to vote. Men who are willing to risk their lives, to sacrifice in full measure and to die if necessary in order to protect and preserve the rights of democracy, should be accorded the widest opportunity to vote in the election.

"The membership of the American Federation of Labor is opposed to the Senate vote measure as passed by the Senate. It is indefensibly restrictive, limited in its application and highly objectionable from either a patriotic or political point of view. It is our opinion that Congress should measure up to all the requirements of the situation to respond to the call of the moment for the application of a broad and cooperative policy which will properly and adequately protect the exercise of soldiers' rights to vote. Legislation which will provide for the realization of this objective should be simple in form and character—should be based upon the principle of the right of American citizens who are abroad serving in the armed forces of the nation to vote.

"In behalf and in the name of the six million members of the American Federation of Labor I respectfully recommend and urge that Congress enact into law legislation which will provide for the exercise of the right of all who are serving in the armed forces of our nation on foreign battlefields and elsewhere to cast their votes in the coming election."

Xmas Greetings To Europe's Workers

Washington, D. C.—Following is a Christmas message broadcast over the OWI shortwave facilities by AFL President William Green to the workers of Europe:

"In the true Christmas spirit, the workers of America give their solemn assurance to their fellow workers in Europe that the forthcoming victory of the United Nations will bring peace on earth and good will toward men.

"The desperate war in which we are now engaged is a supreme test to determine once and for all whether the forces of good or the forces of evil shall prevail in the world.

"Victory for the Axis is unthinkable because it would mean the perpetuation of oppression, misery and human degradation.

"Victory for the United Nations is inevitable because it offers the only hope for the survival of the Divine spark in man, the survival of all the things that make life worthwhile, the survival of the highest precepts of Christianity.

"The workers of America, serving on the war production front and on the battlefront, are determined to stamp out the hate and the misery and the abject slavery which Hitler and his followers have imposed upon the peoples of Europe.

"We fight with inexhaustible strength because our war is a war for liberation and for justice. We are going to bring freedom to the workers of Europe, freedom from forced labor and freedom to join democratic trade unions of their own choice.

"We fight with unquenchable hope for our war is a war to end all wars, a people's war for a people's peace.

"It is our firm resolve that the coming year shall be the last year for all those who willingly and deliberately serve Hitler and the cause of the Nazis.

"It is our deep conviction that the coming year will be the year of victorious destiny for democracy and freedom.

"With these goals uppermost in mind, the workers of America extend their sincere Christmas greetings to the workers of Europe. Let us pray that we can all celebrate Christmas of 1944 in peace."

Eisenhower Liberates Italian Labor

Washington, D. C. — While Allied troops continue to press northward in their efforts to free all of Italy from Axis domination, General Dwight D. Eisenhower has already taken the steps toward liberating Italian labor, it was announced at War Department.

A cablegram sent from General Eisenhower's headquarters to the War Department revealed that the Fascist labor organization had been abolished under a directive issued in Naples and that fullest sanction had been given for free agitation of workers into unions of their own choosing. Representatives of the new labor groups have expressed their wish to cooperate with American and British workers in hastening the destruction of the Axis.

The freeing of the Italian workers was accompanied by a general increase in wages, according to the cablegram. Under Fascist rule wages had been near the starvation level.

The patriotic and unselfish action of the Italian workers was set at the time of the Allied occupation of Sicily when similar action was taken to wipe out the Fascist corporative societies and unions and to substitute a free labor movement.

It is the aim of the Allied Control Commission to establish free trade unions, as rapidly as military developments permit, all of the rights and privileges of which have been won by workers in America and British workers years ago.

A Tribute To The Seabees

(Washington, D. C.—With more than 80 per cent of its enrollment made up of American Federation of Labor union members, the Seabees, Construction Battalions of the U. S. Navy, celebrate their second anniversary on Dec. 28. The following article is a factual tribute to the high record of service made by this working-fighting force during its brief history.)

By REAR ADMIRAL C. H. WOODWARD, U.S.N.,
Chief of the Navy's Industrial Incentive Division

The primary duty of the Seabees is to build advanced bases which are so vital to the Navy. This they have accomplished with a high degree of success, working one moment, fighting the next.

From the Arctic to the tropics the Seabees have continued their former trades in the fight for freedom. A great many of these men were recruited from the ranks of organized labor and they have carried labor's banner proudly on every fighting front. Theirs is a record of which all labor can be proud. It is a record of accomplishment under the most difficult circumstances. The Seabees have rightfully earned the name of "can do" men.

Now a force of 262,000 strong, the Seabees are skilled in the arts of peace and the newer science of destruction. They not only have set records in construction, but also have made others in defending what they have built.

The Seabees marched in with the first waves of invasion troops at Guadalcanal, North Africa, the Aleutians, New Georgia, Sicily, Italy, Bougainville and bloody Tarawa. Some paid with their lives, others emerged heroes. Many have been decorated for bravery in action.

On every fighting front where American troops have struck the Seabees have distinguished themselves. At Guadalcanal they put the finishing touches to and maintained the vital air strip in the face of heavy enemy air attacks. Frequently they dropped their tools to take up rifles to protect what they had built. At Tarawa th, had the air strip ready to receive planes four days after the attack was launched.

Hardships and lack of materials failed to daunt the Seabees. They made the most of what they had during those first two years. What they lacked in materials they possessed in ingenuity. Their ability to make something out of nothing served the Seabees in good stead on all fronts. In many cases it meant the difference between success and failure. The Navy and the fighting forces have received the maximum of benefit from the experience gained by these artisans in their trades in civilian life.

Recruiting of enlisted men for the Seabees started on October 31, 1942. Between December 31, 1942, and that date 262,000 Seabees were taken by the Construction Battalions. Of that number 115,000 are overseas; 58,000 are undergoing basic training while 79,000 are being recruited and are at advanced bases in this country, waiting for word to "shove off" for duties abroad.

Legion Americanization Program Held Free From Anti-Labor Bias

Washington, D. C.—R. H. Harrard, executive vice president of the Owens-Illinois Glass Company, indignantly denied charges published in some labor papers that "racketeering" is the purpose of the American Legion's Americanization drive, approved at the Legion's last convention.

Mr. Barnard, who is associated with others in promoting the Legion drive, has maintained friendly and constructive contractual relations with several AFL unions for many years.

In explaining the Legion's plans, he said:

"The Legion approved of the Americanization plan, designed to show that this is a land of free opportunity, and said that all interests—including labor—should participate in it.

"It further stipulated that no large contributions should be accepted, so as to insure that the program would be representative and dominated by no single group or interest."

In view of Mr. Barnard's fine labor record and the constructive nature of his statement, the AFL Weekly News Service, which did not print the charges in the first place, calls upon the Labor Press to nail the scurrilous lies being circulated about Mr. Barnard and the Legion's drive.

TYPOS REJECT AFL BY NARROW MARGIN

Indianapolis, Ind.—For the third time in five years, members of the International Typographical Union have rejected membership with the AFL by a vote of 24,331 to 22,221. Rejection of the proposal was by a much smaller margin than in the two previous ballottings.

Zander Asks Food Subsidies To Aid 20,000,000 Living On Fixed Incomes

Chicago, Ill.—Limited price subsidies to hold down the cost of living for "twenty million forgotten citizens of America" who are living on fixed incomes established by law or by circumstances beyond their control were urged by General President Arnold S. Zander of the AFL American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees in an address over the Columbia Broadcasting System.

Mr. Zander listed the following fixed income groups to whom, he said, "inflation will bring the curse of starvation and destitution" and to whom "subsidies offer the only hope of rescue from unnecessary suffering":

Nine million dependents of men now serving in the armed forces of the United States; 2,400,000 public employes of the nation—teachers, firemen, policemen, nurses in public hospitals, and the other municipal, county, township, state and federal workers; 2,200,000 aged persons on public assistance rolls; 1,000,000 disabled veterans of past wars who draw fixed pensions; widows and dependent children of veterans; 158,000 disabled firemen, policemen and state and municipal employes receiving pensions; 750,000 dependent children receiving aid from federal and state welfare funds; 53,000 blind people; 700,000 retired workers, widows and young children receiving social insurance payments, and 400,000 persons living on annuities "for which they had to scrape and save during many years of hard work."

"We have to choose now between subsidies and stable prices and wages or run-away prices and inflation," Mr. Zander concluded. "The decision is up to Congress. If you wish to avoid inflation, to keep the cost of living within bounds, your representatives in Congress are bound to respect your wishes. Write or wire them without delay."